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Stesichoriaque graves camenae. – Hor. –

— Fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As buoyant on the stormy main
The parted wreck appears. SCOTT.

'ANTIQUITIES', says Lord Bacon, 'may be regarded as the planks of a shipwreck, which industrious & wise men, gather and preserve from the Deluge of time.' They put us in mind of what has past, and tell us what such we may become ourselves. The productions of which we now boast, may at some future period only remain in disjointed

fragments, to afford room for conjecture, and to exercise the ingenuity of the learned.

There are + many interesting fragments of antiquity with which readers in general are very imperfectly, if at all, acquainted. Amid the wreck of literary productions produced by the successive ravages of ignorance & barbarism, by the sword of the conqueror, and the mercenary folly of the monks of the dark ages, a few have survived, disconnected, it is true, but sufficient to ~~[illegible]~~ give us some idea of what once existed. It is unnecessary for us at this time to enter into a disquisition on the various causes which have operated on the preservation of ~~[illegible]~~ some, & the destruction of other remains of antiquity. We can only lament the fact, leaving it to others to scrutinise its causes.

It is our intention, from time to time, as opportunity may serve, to present to our readers a few of these fragments of antiquity, with critical and biographical remarks. They will be given in an English poetical garb, which, though perhaps not equal to the attempts of some of our most distinguished translators, nor conveying a precise idea of the originals, will be sufficient to afford amusement and instruction to our readers.

We shall commence, in the present number, with the fragments of Tisias, commonly called Stesichorus of Himera. Although the Arundelian marbles have assigned a different age, yet it is pretty well ascertained that he was born in the thirty seventh, and died in the fifty sixth olympiad, nearly six centuries before the Christian

era. Little is known of ~~him~~ the particular incidents of his life. It appears that he was greatly esteemed, & honored at his death with a sumptuous burial. There is an absurd story, to which several great men of antiquity gave credit, that he was deprived of his sight for writing his "Censure of Helen;" but that obeying the admonition of a dream which warned him to write his recantation, he recovered the use of his eyes. He is said to have been called Stesichorus, from adapting the chorus to his harp; an etymology which some authors have treated with utter contempt, although it called forth the learned discussion of many others.

There is a richness and beauty of imagery in the first fragment we offer, which cannot be at all expressed in translation. It appears, together with the subse-

quent one, to be a part of a poem on the Tyrant Geryon.

Ἀέλιος δ' Ὑπεριονίδας δεπας
ἐσκατέβαινε χρύσεον,
ὄφρα δι' ὠκεανοῖο περάσας
ἀφίκοιθ' ἱερᾶς ποτὶ βένθεα
νυκτὸς ἐρεμνᾶς,
ποτὶ ματέρα, κουριδίαν τ' ἄλοχον,
παῖδας τε φίλους· ὁ δ' ἐς ἄλσος ἔβα δά-
φναισι κατάσκιον.
ποσσὶ παὶς Διός.

The sun rides bright upon the sky,
And sends his golden orb from high;
Thro' the wild ocean's wave it flies
Where sacred night's dark dwelling lies;
The mother hails the vanish'd ray,
Her tender babes bless parting day,
The new-made bride the hour shall
greet;
While Jove's own son with eager feet
Hastes to the grove whose laurels
spread
Their deep'ning shadows o'er his head.

There is great beauty in the idea of the sun riding on high in his majesty, & then sinking into that repose so welcome to all. The concluding lines strongly remind us of a passage we recollect seeing in a prize poem

written at Oxford, on the Belvidere Apollo. We leave our readers to decide the relative merits of the two passages.

"Beauteous as vision seen in dreamy sleep
By holy maid, on Delphi's haunted steep,
'Mid the dim twilight of the laurel grove &c"

There is a degree of wildness in his description of the birth place of Geryon.

Διότι γεννηθείη σχεδὸν ἀντιπέραν κλεινᾶς Ἐρυθείας,
Ταρησσῷ πολαμῷ παρὰ παγὰς ἀπείρονας ἀργυροροέν κευθμώνων πέτραις. [ξους,

He rose by Erythea's Isle
Whose shores with constant verdure smile,
The cavern'd rocks his footsteps trod,—
His childhood's desolate abode,—
Where bright Tartessus' source displays
Its sparkling rill of silver rays.

The next fragment is taken from the poem in which he censured Helen, and for which he is reported to have been deprived of sight.

Οὔνεκα Τυνδάρεως
ῥέζων πᾶσι θεοῖσι, μιᾶς Κυπρίδος λάθετ' ἠπιόδωκεινα Τυνδάρεω κούραισι χολωσαμένα διγα-[μους τριγάμους τε τίθησι, [ρους
καὶ λιπεσήνορας.

Upon the altar blazing high
The smoking sacrifice ascends the sky,
To every deity of heaven
A victim Tyndarus hath given,
Save the meek-gifted queen of love alone;—
Her wrath shall make his daughters to atone
For her neglected rite, & slighted name;
Ne blooming spouse shall meet their arms,
But such as tired with others charms
Burn with a pine, but secondary flame.

The imperfect state of the fragments undoubtedly prevents us from arriving at a just conception of the import of many of them. The last quotation seems to be the judgment of Venus for his neglect towards her, upon his daughters by condemning them to become the ~~husbands~~ wives only of men who had been previously married. What the other fragment from the same poem precisely refers to, we are at a loss to determine.

Πολλὰ κυδώνια μᾶλα ποτερρί-
πτουν ποτὶ δίφρον ἄνακτι,
πολλὰ δ' ἐμύρρινα φύλλα
καὶ ῥοδίνους στεφάνους,
ἴων τε κορωνίδας ὄπλας.

The bright Cydonian fruit they throw
Where ~~bright~~ the king is borne,
And myrtle leaves that lovely glow,
And wreaths of roses to adorn
Whereon his footsteps go.

We omit any fragments from his Palinodia, or recantation, deeming them too disconnected to be at all interesting. We shall conclude our extracts with a few taken miscellaneously from his remains.

Τοιάδε χρὴ Χαρίτων δαμώματα
καλλικόμων ὑμνεῖν Φρύγιον μέλος ἐξευρόντα
ἄβρως, ἦρος ἐπερχομένω.

Go-bid the fair-haired graces swell
The music of their sweet-toned shell,
And bid the Phrygian ~~Lotos~~ draw near
In grateful cadence on the ear.

Horace had probably the succeeding fragment in his mind when he began his ode

Descende coelo et dic age tibia,
Regina, longum, Calliope, melos.

Only four lines are preserved.

Ἄγε, Μῶσα λιγεῖα,
ἄρξον ἀοιδᾶς, ἔρατώς
ὕμνως Σαμίων περὶ παιδῶν ἐραλᾶ
φθεγγομένα λύρᾳ,

Come, sweet voiced Muse! the measures move,
The joyous hymns that sing of love,
The lyre that strike to love alone
Bid sing the Samian youths with gentle tone.

The melancholy manner of the following three fragments convey indefinable sensations to the mind. They seem as if saved from the tempest ages, to warn us of our doom; like the spirit of the past, looking from the clouds of departing time, his voice broken by the winds, and his admonitions scarcely distinguished.

Ἀτειδέστατα γὰρ καὶ ἀμάχανα
τοὺς θανόντας κλαίειν.

When death is hovering wild & drear,
The shadows of past deeds appear,
The failing spirit mourns to view
Their useless waste, their sickly hue.

Θανόντας ἀνδρὸς τᾶδ' ἀπόλλυτ' ἀπ'
ἀνθρώπων χαρις.

Life hears the voice of flattery —
When death's dark tempest gathers nigh,
The love that bloom'd around the head
Dies with the breath, & leaves the dead.

——— Μάλα τοι μάλιστα
Παιγμοσύνας τε φιλεῖ καὶ μολπὰς Ἀπόλλων,
κήδεα δὲ στονάχας τ' Ἄϊδας ἴσχει.

Apollo loves the sportive song,
The voice of mirth, the festal throng —
The darkness of the tomb alone
Yields the sad sigh & tortured groan.

The following encomium upon Minerva is the last we shall give, though it has been a matter of doubt whether or no it is a fragment of Stesichorus. It contains an enumeration of her various characters in a ~~beauty~~ brevity of diction, peculiar to the Greek. The English translation is unavoidably more prolix.

Παλλάδα περσέπολιν, δεινὰν θεὸν, εὐρυκύδοι-
κλήΐξω, πολεμαδόκον, ἀγνὰν, [μον,
παῖδα Διὸς μεγάλω, δαμάσιππον, αἰθέρος
[Ἀβάναν.

Pallas I sing, whose powerful hand
Bids cities perish from the land,
A goddess of unequalled might,
Who excites to the deathly fight;
Herself in warlike armor mailed,
Without a blot impure assailed;
The warrior's generous soul she fires
And fills his breast with war's desires,
From Jove omnipotent she springs,
While darkness shrouds her with his wings.

Upon a general review of the above fragments, we cannot but lament that more have not been handed down to posterity. It is a melancholy fact, that out of twenty-six books of Stesichorus, such a scanty portion remains. Indeed the ravages on Grecian literature have been enormous; some of the best works having been destroyed, or defaced so as to be almost illegible. Cumberland in the Observer, has been at considerable pains in collecting the fragments of ~~anti~~ Grecian antiquity. Many however have been omitted by that learned essayist, thus affording an opportunity for others to follow in his footsteps. How far our endeavors may succeed, it would not become us to determine. It is a field of speculation never we believe before attempted in this country; and though the means of

pursuing it are extremely limited owing to our distance from the old world, the seat of classical learning, we yet hope to be able to present an amusing collection of ancient fragments. Classical literature has been much neglected in our country; and if our humble efforts can tend to call forth any curiosity for its researches, we shall deem ourselves amply satisfied.

E.